Happiness is 4-H

By FRANK SWEET
Extension Agent

Twenty three Appomattox 4-H'ers participated in last weeks State 4-H Congress at Virginia Tech. The week long event involved teenager 4-H'ers from across the state. Awards are presented at State 4-H Congress for winners achievement records; judging programs, demonstration and illustrated talks and various skill events. Appomattox 4-H'ers recognized at Congress included achievement record winners David Caldwell, Terri Nash, Laure Cowan and Laura Walton. Demonstration and Illustrated talk winners: Steve Cyrus, Ruby Smith and Robert Taylor. Laura Walton was also recognized as the state 4-H Dress Revue winner.

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One hundred and fifty seven 4-H'ers attended Holiday Lake 4-H Camp during the week of June 15-19. Laura McGrath and Jeff Williams were selected as the outstanding campers of the week. Appomattox County will go to 4-H Camp from June 28 - July 2 in 1982.

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A group of 12 4-H'ers and 2 chaperones from Wisconsin will arrive in Appomattox on Monday afternoon for a week long stay. The 4-H'ers and their chaperones will be staying with various families during their visit. Several group activities and tours are planned including a trip to Monticello and a picnic and hike up the Peaks of Otter. Appomattox 4-H members will have the opportunity to travel to Wisconsin during the summer of 1982.

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Now is the time for 4-H'ers to begin thinking about the Five County Fair which will be held in Farmville the week of September 14-18. 4-H'ers who will be showing livestock should begin to select their animals if they have not already done so. Also, it's a good idea to plant some late vegetables to make sure that you will have some fresh exhibits in the middle of September. We have an excellent guide for selecting and exhibiting vegetables in the Extension Office. Please give us a call if you would like one.

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4-H Summer Sewing Classes will begin in early July and be held in various locations across Appomattox County. Give us a call at 352-8244 if you're interested but have not signed up. Adult volunteers are also needed to help teach the classes.

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A great big "Thank You" is extended to the adult leaders who helped with 4-H Camp this summer. Included are: Mrs. Gladys Moon, Mrs. Bernadette Servis, Mr. Michael Hancock, Miss Pam White, Mrs. Janet Morgan, Miss Vicki Glover, Mrs. Mary Randolph, Mr. Tom Conrad, Miss Lisa Moore and Miss Jane Hix.

Manley Ferguson, Jr.

Local youths are winners

Four local youths have been named winners in competition at the State 4-H Congress in Blacksburg, according to a release from the VPI Extension office.

Ruby Smith, age 16, was named winner of the 1981 State 4-H Dog Care and Training Area in the illustrated talk and method demonstration category.

The daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ezekiel Smith, she will receive a radio, donated by the Virginia Federation of Dog Clubs and Leaders.

Laura Walton, age 16, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Walton, was named winner of the 1981 State 4-H Fashion Revue Award in the illustrated talk and method demonstration category.

She will receive a trip to National 4-H Congress in Chicago, donated by J. P. Stevens.

Steve Cyrus, age 15, was named winner of the 1981 State 4-H Archery Skills award in the illustrated talk and method demonstration category.

The son of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Cyrus, Steve will receive archery equipment.

Robert Taylor, age 14, of Pamplin, was named winner of the 1981 State 4-H Fishing Division and director of the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service. He spoke on "4-H-An Attitude Changer" following the meeting's theme, "4-H Changes Attitudes."

A program on "You Have the Right, If You Know It," to help youth understand regulations affecting youth employment, transportation, financial transactions and parental rights, was one of the featured sessions at the Congress. Share-the-Fun and fashion review activities provided entertainment for the delegates as well as opportunities for youth in these projects to demonstrate their skills and talents.

Receives degree

Manley Ferguson, Jr. of Concord, Va. received his Bachelor of Science Degree in Mechanical Engineering Technology on Saturday, June 6, 1981 from V.P.I. and SU.

Manley is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Manley Ferguson, Sr., of Route 2, Concord, Va. Manley is a 1977 graduate of Appomattox County High School.

He is married to the former Vanessa Sales and they have one son, Manley III.

Manley has accepted a position with Babcock and Wilcox in Lynchburg, Va.

Two on list

Two students from Appomattox County have been named to the Dean's List at Virginia Tech for the Spring Quarter, according to a release from the college.

Karen F. Carter, a senior studying agriculture education, and William D. Perdue, a senior studying agricultural engineering, were both named to the Dean's List for the Spring Quarter.

Local forestry team takes honors in 4-H competition

Members of the Forestry team from Appomattox County--Glen McClenny, Blair Smith, Richard Conner and Dale Glover--were the top team in a program held during the 1981 State 4-H Congress.

They received an award donated by C&P Telephone during an awards program, part of the Congress held at Virginia Tech June 22-26. 4-H is part of Virginia Extension.

During the Congress, over 1,400 4-H'ers, volunteer leaders, Extension staff members and friends of 4-H were on the University's campus to participate in demonstrations, judging contests, recreation, career workshops, an information fair and the All-Star tapping ceremony.

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Good news for homemakers

Now is the time for pickle know-how

By SHIRLEY W. WALTON
Extension Agent

Pickle Know-How

(Note: Because of many requests this information is being reprinted. This is the first in a series of two articles on pickle-making. The purpose of these two articles will be to answer your questions and help you be more successful with your pickle-making efforts during the summer.)

There are four categories of pickling: 1) **Quick Processed Pickles** - In this method of pickling, vegetables are prepared, simmered in spiced vinegar or liquid, packed and processed. 2). **Brined Pickles** - Vegetables are prepared, soaked for several hours or overnight in a brine, then either packed, covered with boiling spiced vinegar and processed or simmered in the spice vinegar, packed and processed. Some pickles are in brine or cured for longer length of time, such as the 14-day method or the 21-day method of making the old fashioned type pickles. 3) **Fruit Pickles** - Examples of these are watermelon rind, cantaloupe, pumpkin, peaches and pears. These are simmered in a spicy sweet and/or sour liquid, packed and processed. 4) **Relishes** - A variety of vegetables that are chopped or coarsely ground are then simmered in a spiced vinegar liquid, packed and processed.

Pickle-making is quite an old art, and I say it is an art because you have your own special methods and own special recipes for making pickles. I would like to share with you some simple and short directions on how you can do you various types of pickles in your home with a high degree of success.

Use unwaxed cucumbers if you are purchasing them. Waxed cucumbers must be scrubbed with soapy water to remove the oily film. It is best to select a variety of cucumber grown especially for pickle making. Of course, this needs to be decided upon when you are planting your garden if you are growing your own, but if you are purchasing them, be sure to select a variety that is especially grown for the pickling processes.

White vinegar needs to be used for light colored pickles, for relishes and chutneys. Cider or malt vinegar is best for darker colored products. Vinegar serves two purposes in the pickle-making process--that of preserving the product and modifying its taste. The addition of water to vinegar solution weakens the vinegar as a preservative. If a less sour product is preferred, add sugar rather than decreasing the vinegar.

Do not reduce the amount of sugar or vinegar in any pickle recipe, since both are preservatives. In fact, you may increase the vinegar or sugar by small amounts if you prefer the pickle or relish to be less thick and sweeter.

When selecting the salt to use for a brine solution, use pure granulated pickling salt. Table salt has an anti-caking ingredient that will cause the brine to become cloudy. Iodized salt also causes pickles to darken. Pickling salt is also known as flake salt, kosher salt, dairy salt or cheese salt. It has a more pronounced flavor than ordinary salt. Do not confuse either coarse salt or pickling salt with what is called rock salt or ice cream salt. These two are sold for use in ice cream freezers only. They are coarse, but impure. Do not use these in your pickle-making process. To make a salt brine solution use as follows:

Medium brine - ¾ cup of salt per quart of water

Strong brine - 1 cup of salt per quart of water

When handling your cucumbers, it is best for them to go straight from the picking to the pickling. This means that processing should start as soon as possible after picking or purchasing. If you cannot begin on your pickling immediately, spread your cucumbers out where they will be ventilated and cool.

It is extremely important to remove the blossom from cucumbers, and you may even want to snip the blossom end of the cucumber off when preparing it. These blossom ends can be the source of enzymes responsible for soft pickles. Slightly underripe cucumbers retain their shape and texture better after being pickled. Do not use any fruits or vegetables for pickling that show evidence of mold. This can cause an off-flavor in the finished product and an inferior pickling job.

When handling fruits or vegetables for pickling, wash thoroughly in cold water to remove soil, but gently to avoid bruising. This, too, can cause problems in the later process. Avoid soaking produce of any kind, whether making pickles or using for table use. This causes a loss of flavor and a definite loss of nutrients.

Another important ingredient in the pickling process is the use of fresh spices. Old spices impart a musty taste to preserved foods. Be sure that your spices are fresh. A good method of always knowing how old your spices are is to date each can or container as you purchase them in the grocery store.

When putting pickles in brine, use large stoneware, glass, pottery or unchipped enamelware containers for recipes that will remain in vinegar or brine solution for any length of time. For cooking you will need unchipped enamelware, aluminum or stainless steel sauce pot deep enough so liquid will not boil over. Never use copper, brass, iron or galvanized utensils. These metals will react with acid and salt in the pickling liquid and cause undersirable color changes or can even form hazardous compounds.

Next week I will be writing about some common causes of pickling problems.

Should you have a homemaking question or problem, please call or write the Appomattox County Extension Office. Call 352-8244 or write P. O. Box 488, Appomattox, Va. 24522.

Many of you are involved with food preservation, making jams and jellies, pickles and canning. Should you have a question about this, call our office for help.

Have a good week!

Recipe Of The Week

Mrs. Babcock's Creamed Cabbage Casserole

Note:: With an excellent crop of cabbage this year, the requests have been frequent for a delicious way to prepare cabbage for family and friends. This is a favorite recipe we have used before in this column.

Cut medium fine 1 fresh green cabbage (2 to 2½ pounds). Boil cabbage in salted water (1 teaspoon salt to 1 quart water) for about 15 minutes or until tender. Do not cook until the cabbage is soft.

Drain well and put ½ cabbage into baking dish. Add a layer of white sauce, then another layer of cabbage and white sauce.

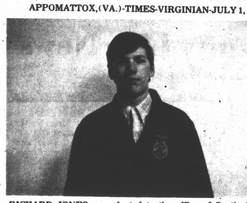
Top with 1 ½ to 2 cups buttered bread crumbs which have been slightly browned and crumbled finely. This casserole can be refrigerated until ready for serving, then it can be put into a 300° oven and warmed for approximately 20 minutes--or until hot.

The white sauce recipe is as follows:

2 cups milk
4 tablespoons flour
1 stick butter or margarine
½ teaspoon salt
⅛ teaspoon pepper

Melt butter in saucepan, add salt, pepper and flour. Mix well. Add milk and stir until thickened and smooth.

The delicious creamed cabbage casserole is a favorite of Mrs. Annie Laurie Babcock's. All of us know of Mrs. Babcock's excellent reputation as a great cook. Many thanks to her for sharing this delicious casserole with us.



RICHARD JONES was elected to the office of Sentinel for the Virginia Association of FFA at the State FFA Convention in Blacksburg last week. Richard will serve in this capacity for one year during which he will represent the FFA at conferences, banquets, chapter meetings, fairs, and next year's state convention.

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